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THE AGRICULTURAL SITUATION

A Brief Summary of Economic Conditions

ISSUED MONTHLY BY THE BUREAU OF AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

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SOME SPRING SETBACKS

April provided many setbacks for what had promised to be an early season. The reports from over the country during last month recorded every possible sort of weather disturbance. Most disastrous were the floods in the Central States. The inundation of cotton lands in the lower Mississippi Valley will unquestionably have an effect on cotton acreage this year, though just how extensive remains to be seen. The rains and freezes in the West were a cause not only of delay in spring work but of widespread damage to fruit and grain. On the other hand, the spring wheat territory is heartened once more by a real supply of soil moisture. The far West experienced severe snowstorms and low temperatures with resulting injury to fruit and tender crops even on the coast. Portions of the East have been too dry for good soil preparation, abnormally warm weather alternating with heavy frosts. As regards general farm work, it may still be called an early season in the South but elsewhere operations have begun to lag behind schedule.

This is the season of activity in southern truck areas. The South has increased its acreages over last season by probably one-half more early celery and carrots, one-third more early lettuce, tomatoes, cucumbers, beans, and strawberries, and Florida and Texas potatoes. May is strawberry month and both acreage and yield are reported about one-fourth larger this year. Shipments may regain the 18,000 car average of 1922-24, compared with about 13,000 the last two seasons.

Among the livestock industries, perhaps the most significant development during the month has been the decline in price of hogs. This seems to be attributed mostly to the demand situation, European markets being weaker and domestic consumption of pork products lighter, especially in the South. The demand for cattle, on the other hand, has been strong. Cattlemen are restocking and the effects are being felt throughout the industry. The new crops of calves, pigs, and lambs which come most heavily in April encountered bad weather conditions last month. Reports begin to reflect losses from that fact.

This bureau's estimate of 10 days ago indicated a decrease in farm population of 649,000 persons last year, the greatest decrease since 1920. The net movement away from farms was estimated at 1,020,000, but this figure of loss was reduced by the excess of births over deaths on farms. The estimates indicate a total loss of around 3,000,000 in farm population since the census of 1920, a factor of more consequence than all current shifts of weather, production, or prices.

KEY REGIONS AT A GLANCE

The East.—Experienced typically variable weather last month, heat waves and freezes. Land rather too dry most of month. Outdoor work made progress, however; fair area of oats sown and considerable other plowing done. Planting potatoes and corn in more southern areas. Fruit prospects appear fairly good. Dairy situation continues favorable. Milk prices highest in about six years. Feed prices also somewhat higher, however.

The South.—Most of territory still advanced over last season in respect to crop work and growth. Conditions very variable during month, however; too dry in some eastern sections, disastrous floods in central valleys, frosts and rains in west. Winter grain headed; some damage from rust, etc. Cotton planting has not made as rapid progress as anticipated; impression still prevails that west will reduce acreage less than east. Fertilizer sales reported less than last year in sections of the eastern belt. Fruit prospects considered fairly good.

Corn Belt.—Work on the land delayed by heavy rains and cold waves. Many sections have had valley lowlands under water. Considerable area intended for oats not yet sown but grain is making fair growth where in ground. Spring sowing now called two weeks late in Iowa. Winter grains are generally doing well where not flooded. Some complaints of pig losses from bad weather at farrowing time. General sentiment continues optimistic on hog and cattle situation, notwithstanding declines in hog prices.

Wheat Belt.—Heavy rains last month gave winter wheat a great impetus although flooded some territory in east. Western edge of belt had two severe cold waves with some damage thought resulting. Southwest reports excellent crop prospect; wheat beginning to head in places. Seeding of spring wheat delayed by wet weather in north. Early sown grain making good growth. Farm labor supply noticeably greater this spring.

Range Country.—Just emerging from a relapse of winter. Heavy snows and blizzards in north last month, followed later by considerable rain. Spring work delayed. Livestock came through bad weather well but much feeding necessitated and transportation of feed difficult. Some losses of lambs. Grass starting slowly. Stock mostly off winter ranges farther south, however. Some complaint of drought in New Mexico. Sheepshearing in progress.

Pacific Coast.—Frosts of last month damaged early fruit in north and to an undetermined extent in California, where cotton, melons, and other tender crops also suffered. Some losses of lambs caused in north. Sheepshearing well along though was delayed somewhat by cold. Spring work made about usual progress in south. Growth of sugar beets, asparagus, spinach retarded by cool weather. Citrus fruits doing well; navels blooming and Valencias well colored in south; picking of navels continues.

CHANGES IN NUMBER OF PERSONS LIVING ON FARMS DURING 1926

[Number of persons in thousands, i. e., 000 omitted]

Division	Estimated farm population of Jan. 1, 1926	Arrivals		Departures		Farm population Jan. 1, 1927	
		Births	From cities, towns, and villages	Deaths	To cities, towns, and villages		
		Number	Number	Number	Number	Per cent	Number
United States.....	28, 541	658	1, 135	287	2, 155	97. 7	27, 892
Geographic divisions:							
New England.....	651	13	52	8	72	97. 7	636
Middle Atlantic.....	1, 808	38	101	24	155	97. 8	1, 768
East North Central.....	4, 425	88	164	35	319	97. 7	4, 323
West North Central.....	4, 826	87	193	39	338	98. 0	4, 729
South Atlantic.....	5, 531	144	133	61	354	97. 5	5, 393
East South Central.....	4, 586	138	101	50	266	98. 3	4, 509
West South Central.....	4, 727	118	194	52	402	97. 0	4, 585
Mountain.....	973	20	95	9	130	97. 6	949
Pacific.....	1, 014	12	102	9	119	98. 6	1, 000

The farm population of the United States decreased 649,000 persons last year, the biggest decrease in any year since 1920, according to estimates by this bureau. The number of persons living on farms January 1, 1927, is estimated at 27,892,000 against 28,541,000 January 1, 1926. The 1925 agricultural census figure, 28,982,000, was used as a base for the bureau's calculations.

The bureau's figures for 1925, revised on the basis of the 1925 agricultural census, show a net loss of 441,000 persons in farm population that year. The gross movement from farms to cities was 1,900,000 and the gross movement to farms 1,066,000, making a net movement to cities, not counting births and deaths, of 834,000 persons.

In 1924, the gross movement from farm to town was 2,075,000. The gross movement from town to farm was 1,396,000; leaving a net movement away from the farms of 679,000. Taking account of births and deaths the net loss of farm population was 182,000.

In 1922 (no estimate was made in 1923) the gross movement from farm to town was 2,000,000. The gross movement from town to farm was 880,000; leaving a net movement away from the farms of 1,120,000. Including births and deaths the net loss of farm population was 460,000.

From 1920 to 1925 it appears that the farm population declined about 2,000,000, or an average of about 400,000 per year.

AVERAGE PRICES OF FARM PRODUCTS RECEIVED BY PRODUCERS

Actual prices received by producers at local farm markets as reported to the division of crop and livestock estimates of this bureau. Average of reports covering the United States, weighted according to relative importance of district and State.

	5-year Average August, 1909- July, 1914	March average 1910- 1914	March, 1926	Febru- ary, 1927	March, 1927
Cotton, per lb-----cents--	12. 4	12. 4	16. 5	11. 5	12. 5
Corn, per bu-----do-----	64. 2	61. 3	66. 6	66. 5	65. 2
Wheat, per bu-----do-----	88. 4	88. 9	146. 0	122. 8	120. 9
Hay, per ton-----dollars--	11. 87	12. 06	12. 97	13. 64	13. 48
Potatoes, per bu---cents--	69. 7	67. 5	225. 6	134. 1	127. 0
Oats, per bu-----do-----	39. 9	40. 3	38. 6	43. 4	43. 4
Beef cattle, per 100 lbs. -----dollars--	5. 22	5. 29	6. 65	6. 60	6. 82
Hogs, per 100 lbs---do-----	7. 23	7. 41	11. 65	11. 19	10. 89
Eggs, per dozen---cents--	21. 5	19. 3	24. 1	29. 0	20. 8
Butter, per lb-----do-----	25. 5	25. 6	41. 7	43. 7	43. 5
Butterfat, per lb---do-----			42. 9	46. 8	48. 0
Wool, per lb-----do-----	17. 7	18. 7	34. 7	31. 1	31. 3
Veal calves, per 100 lbs. -----dollars--	6. 75	6. 92	9. 75	10. 10	10. 10
Lambs, per 100 lbs---do-----	5. 91	6. 22	11. 56	10. 84	11. 55
Horses, each-----do-----	142. 00	144. 00	82. 00	77. 00	79. 00

The general level of farm prices on March 15 was 126 per cent of the pre-war level as compared with 127 per cent February 15 and 140 per cent March 15 a year ago.

A further advance since February 15 in cotton and cottonseed from 94 to 102 per cent of the pre-war level was more than offset by the continued decline in egg prices from 135 to 97 per cent; the farm price of eggs is now at the lowest point since the spring of 1924, and at 97 per cent of pre-war level is in striking contrast to the price of chickens at 187 per cent. It is beginning to look as if the production of eggs is reacting more promptly than hogs to a continuation of relatively low feed prices. The unseasonably warm weather of the past few months has undoubtedly been an important factor in increased egg production.

The dairy industry from a farm price standpoint is in an enviable position this spring. While the price of farm butter on March 15 remained at about the February level, the price of butterfat increased. The farm price of butter was nearly 2 cents a pound above March a year ago, butterfat 5 cents higher, veal calves 35 cents per 100 pounds and milk cows \$7 per head more. With the exception of oats and barley, the farm prices of feed grains are generally lower than a year ago.

PRICE INDEXES FOR MARCH, 1927

Farm products figures from this bureau; commodity groups from Bureau of Labor Statistics (latter shown to nearest whole number). Shows year ago and latest available month.

FARM PRODUCTS

[Prices at the farm; August, 1909–July, 1914=100]

	March, 1926	February, 1927	March, 1927	Month trend
Cotton.....	133	93	101	Higher.
Corn.....	104	104	102	Lower.
Wheat.....	165	139	137	Do.
Hay.....	109	115	114	Do.
Potatoes.....	324	192	182	Do.
Beef cattle.....	128	127	131	Higher.
Hogs.....	161	155	150	Lower.
Eggs.....	112	135	97	Do.
Butter.....	164	171	171	Unchanged.
Wool.....	195	175	176	Higher.

COMMODITY GROUPS

[Wholesale prices; 1910–1914=100]¹

	March, 1926	February, 1927	March, 1927	Month trend
Farm products.....	144	137	137	Unchanged.
Food, etc.....	150	147	146	Lower.
Cloths and clothing.....	184	172	172	Unchanged.
Fuel and lighting.....	203	205	195	Lower.
Metal and metal products..	137	131	132	Higher.
Building materials.....	181	173	172	Lower.
Chemicals, etc.....	130	121	119	Do.
House-furnishing goods...	170	163	163	Unchanged.
All commodities.....	154	149	148	Lower.

¹ Bureau of Labor Statistics index numbers converted to 1910–1914 base.

RELATIVE PURCHASING POWER

[At March, 1927, farm prices; August, 1909-July, 1914=100]

In terms of—	Of a unit of—				
	Cotton	Corn	Wheat	Hay	Potatoes
All commodities.....	68	69	92	77	123
Cloths, etc.....	59	59	80	66	106
Fuel, etc.....	52	52	70	58	93
Metals, etc.....	77	77	104	86	138
Building materials.....	59	59	80	66	106
House-furnishing goods....	62	62	84	70	112

In terms of—	Beef cattle	Hogs	Eggs	Butter	Wool
All commodities.....	89	102	65	115	119
Cloths, etc.....	76	88	56	99	102
Fuel, etc.....	67	77	50	87	90
Metals, etc.....	100	114	73	130	134
Building materials.....	76	88	56	99	102
House-furnishing goods....	81	92	59	105	108

The unit exchange position of the five representative crops listed above did not change much during March. The cotton index did advance 6 points while potatoes declined 6 points.

In the case of the livestock products beef cattle advanced 4 points. The most striking change in price position was in eggs, the unit purchasing power of which declined 25 points from the previous month. Eggs are always subject to a sharp seasonal movement in price but the decline this spring has been especially pronounced.

This decline in egg prices places that product at the bottom of the foregoing list in respect to its indicated exchange position. Eggs are now so low that the hitherto favorable spread between egg and feed prices has been temporarily wiped out. It is to be presumed that the price of eggs will advance again as soon as the spring height of production drops off. However, the price position, the quantity of eggs in cold storage and other statistics on poultry all suggest that it may soon be time for conservatism within that industry. The index of purchasing power merely reflects the final effects of supply and demand conditions.

The general index of purchasing power of farm products in terms of nonagricultural commodities remained at 82 in March, the five pre-war years being considered as 100. This compares with 87 in the same month a year ago, 91 two years ago, 79 three years ago.

GENERAL BUSINESS INDICATORS RELATED TO AGRICULTURE

	1926, March	1927, February	1927, March	Month's trend
PRODUCTION				
Pig iron daily (thousand tons)----	111	105	112	Increase.
Bituminous coal (million tons)----	46	53	60	Do.
Steel ingots (thousand long tons)--	4, 488	3, 831	4, 599	Do.
CONSUMPTION				
Cotton by mills (thousand bales)--	636	590	694	Do.
Unfilled orders Steel Corporation (thousand tons).	4, 380	3, 597	3, 553	Decrease.
Building contracts in 27 North- eastern States (million dollars).	490	336	522	Increase.
Hogs slaughtered (thousands)----	2, 144	2, 006	2, 386	Do.
Cattle slaughtered (thousands)---	1, 221	1, 012	1, 134	Do.
Sheep slaughtered (thousands)----	1, 001	829	843	Do.
MOVEMENTS				
Bank clearings (New York) (billion dollars).	28	23	29	Do.
Car loadings (thousands)-----	3, 877	3, 824	4, 016	Do.
Mail-order sales (million dollars)--	40	35	41	Do.
Employees, New York State fac- tories (thousands).	517	491	494	Do.
Average price 25 industrial stocks (dollars).	158	181	189	Do.
Interest rate (4-6 months' paper, New York) (per cent).	4. 28	3. 88	3. 98	Do.
Retail food price index (Depart- ment of Labor). ¹	160	156	154	Lower.
Wholesale price index (Depart- ment of Labor). ¹	152	146	145	Do.

¹ 1913=100.

Most observers appear to regard the business situation as satisfactory, with productive activity above normal, employment fairly complete, and wages high. The bituminous coal strike materialized and was apparently accepted by business men as nothing to become nervous over. The stock market has been active and security prices high during the month past. Interest rates continue low, with consequent ease in the credit situation. Bank clearings, railway traffic, retail sales all reflect a heavy volume of business.

There are difficulties in some particular industries, oil, for example. People are wondering when the automobile industry will show a recession, but meanwhile it seems able to go right along manufacturing a heavy volume of cars and finding people to buy them on some kind of a basis. The building boom appears to be somewhat less of a boom than in recent seasons but even in this field the activity is remarkable.

If there has been some recession in employment since last year it has not brought wages down. Farm wages, responding to the city rates, are still high this spring.

GENERAL TREND OF WAGES AND PRICES

[1910-1914=100]

Year and month	General wage level ¹	Farm wages ²	Retail price of food ³	Wholesale price of food ³	Wholesale price all commodities ⁴
1910.....	-----	97	96	100	103
1911.....	-----	97	95	96	95
1912.....	-----	101	101	103	101
1913.....	-----	104	103	99	102
1914.....	⁵ 100	101	106	101	100
1915.....	101	102	104	104	103
1916.....	114	112	117	120	129
1917.....	129	140	151	166	180
1918.....	160	176	174	187	198
1919.....	185	206	192	205	210
1920.....	222	239	210	218	230
1921.....	203	150	158	143	150
1922.....	197	146	146	137	152
1923.....	214	166	151	143	156
1924.....	218	166	150	143	152
1925.....	223	168	162	156	162
1926.....	228	171	166	152	154
March—					
1921.....	212	-----	161	150	158
1922.....	193	-----	143	136	145
1923.....	212	-----	146	142	161
1924.....	222	-----	156	140	153
1925.....	224	-----	149	158	164
1926					
January.....	229	159	169	155	159
February.....	225	-----	166	152	158
March.....	229	-----	165	150	154
April.....	227	166	167	152	154
May.....	226	-----	166	153	154
June.....	228	-----	165	156	155
July.....	227	174	162	153	153
August.....	227	-----	161	150	152
September.....	231	-----	163	151	153
October.....	231	176	165	151	152
November.....	230	-----	167	150	151
December.....	232	-----	167	150	150
1927					
January.....	232	162	164	149	150
February.....	231	-----	161	147	149
March.....	234	-----	159	146	148

¹ Average weekly earnings, New York State factories.² Index based on both monthly and daily wages.³ Bureau of Labor Statistics index numbers converted to 1910-1914 base.⁴ Bureau of Labor Statistics.⁵ June.

GENERAL TREND OF PRICES AND PURCHASING POWER

[On five-year base, August, 1909–July, 1914=100]

Year and month	Index number of farm prices							Wholesale prices of non-agricultural commodities ¹	Relative purchasing power of farmer's product ²
	Grains	Fruits and vegetables	Meat animals	Dairy and poultry products	Cotton and cotton-seed	Unclassified	All groups, 30 items		
1910.....	104	91	103	101	113	102	103	102	101
1911.....	96	106	87	95	101	103	95	96	99
1912.....	106	110	95	103	87	106	99	100	99
1913.....	92	92	108	100	97	94	100	105	95
1914.....	103	100	112	101	85	95	102	97	105
1915.....	120	83	104	99	78	95	100	101	99
1916.....	126	123	120	106	119	100	117	138	85
1917.....	217	202	173	133	187	130	176	182	97
1918.....	226	162	202	160	245	157	200	188	107
1919.....	231	189	206	182	247	162	209	199	105
1920.....	231	249	173	197	248	152	205	241	85
1921.....	112	148	108	151	101	90	116	167	69
1922.....	105	152	113	135	156	94	124	168	74
1923.....	114	136	106	147	216	109	135	171	79
1924.....	129	124	109	137	211	100	134	162	83
1925.....	156	160	139	143	177	92	147	165	89
1926.....	129	189	146	141	122	88	136	161	85
March—									
1920.....	246	279	184	193	298	173	222	247	90
1921.....	131	125	125	152	80	99	123	177	70
1922.....	111	181	118	129	131	80	123	155	79
1923.....	117	130	110	144	224	105	136	179	76
1924.....	114	123	104	136	219	99	131	166	79
1925.....	172	138	145	134	195	94	151	165	91
1926.....	133	220	147	137	133	85	140	162	87
1926									
October.....	123	136	148	144	94	97	130	160	81
November....	121	142	142	157	88	97	130	161	80
December....	120	137	140	161	81	91	127	158	80
1927									
January.....	120	140	140	152	85	87	126	156	81
February.....	122	142	143	143	94	84	127	155	82
March.....	121	140	144	133	102	81	126	153	82

¹ Computed by Bureau of Labor Statistics from wholesale prices of all commodities except those from United States farms. 1910–1914=100.

² The value of a unit of the farmer's product in exchange for nonagricultural products at wholesale prices, compared with pre-war values. Obtained by dividing index of all groups (30 items) by the index of the wholesale prices of nonagricultural products.

THE TREND OF MOVEMENT TO MARKET

Figures show wheat, corn, hogs, cattle, sheep receipts at primary markets; butter receipts at five markets, compiled by this bureau. All figures given to nearest thousand, that is, three ciphers omitted.

Month	Receipts					
	Wheat	Corn	Hogs	Cattle	Sheep	Butter
Total—	<i>Thousand bushels</i>	<i>Thousand bushels</i>	<i>Thous- sands</i>	<i>Thou- sands</i>	<i>Thou- sands</i>	<i>Thousand pounds</i>
1920-----	332, 314	210, 332	42, 121	22, 197	23, 538	402, 755
1921-----	435, 606	340, 908	41, 101	19, 787	24, 168	468, 150
1922-----	413, 106	378, 598	44, 068	23, 218	22, 364	526, 714
1923-----	386, 430	271, 858	55, 330	23, 211	22, 025	545, 380
1924-----	482, 007	278, 719	55, 414	23, 695	22, 201	587, 477
1925-----	346, 381	223, 604	43, 929	24, 067	22, 100	574, 489
1926-----	362, 876	234, 873	39, 772	23, 872	23, 868	549, 472
March—						
1920-----	16, 383	22, 510	3, 940	1, 662	1, 315	29, 241
1921-----	20, 927	32, 514	3, 386	1, 566	1, 750	29, 107
1922-----	19, 047	33, 930	3, 411	1, 622	1, 465	37, 463
1923-----	22, 081	24, 710	4, 928	1, 502	1, 430	41, 282
1924-----	17, 434	29, 405	4, 833	1, 556	1, 367	44, 082
1925-----	16, 925	23, 868	3, 528	1, 860	1, 504	40, 725
1926						
January-----	19, 076	28, 268	4, 304	1, 840	1, 548	39, 424
February-----	15, 923	25, 718	3, 372	1, 551	1, 486	39, 507
March-----	15, 052	20, 080	3, 579	1, 811	1, 695	46, 077
April-----	13, 458	12, 589	3, 135	1, 711	1, 502	45, 501
May-----	15, 260	11, 972	3, 037	1, 894	1, 717	54, 464
June-----	18, 505	23, 912	3, 143	1, 871	1, 913	75, 931
July-----	68, 200	13, 353	2, 854	1, 821	1, 739	68, 393
August-----	67, 952	11, 513	2, 804	1, 997	2, 277	50, 476
September-----	46, 266	13, 740	2, 819	2, 397	3, 279	44, 761
October-----	35, 124	28, 613	3, 261	2, 674	3, 090	38, 166
November-----	28, 229	22, 587	3, 554	2, 460	1, 917	34, 180
December-----	19, 831	22, 528	3, 910	1, 846	1, 706	36, 054
1927						
January-----	19, 379	23, 658	4, 252	1, 832	1, 740	37, 705
February-----	19, 462	24, 499	3, 308	1, 555	1, 496	38, 375
March-----	17, 504	18, 535	3, 754	1, 743	1, 558	45, 210

Grain movement from the country districts now shows the usual end-of-year shrinkage. Wheat receipts during March were about in line with last two years. Movement of corn was relatively light, a reaction presumably from low prices and market accumulations.

Receipts of hogs, cattle, and butter increased somewhat. Receipts of butter were the largest for any March in six years.

THE TREND OF EXPORT MOVEMENT

[Compiled from the Department of Commerce reports by division of statistical research of this bureau]

Year and month	Wheat, ¹ including flour	Tobacco (leaf)	Bacon, ² hams, and shoulders	Lard	Total ³ meats	Cotton, ⁴ running bales
Total—	1,000 bushels	1,000 pounds	1,000 pounds	1,000 pounds	1,000 pounds	1,000 bales
1920.....	311, 601	467, 662	821, 922	612, 250	1, 043, 500	6, 111
1921.....	359, 021	515, 353	647, 680	868, 942	786, 280	6, 385
1922.....	235, 307	430, 908	631, 452	766, 950	733, 832	6, 015
1923.....	175, 190	474, 500	828, 890	1, 035, 382	958, 472	5, 224
1924.....	241, 454	546, 555	637, 980	944, 095	729, 832	6, 653
1925.....	138, 784	468, 471	467, 459	688, 829	547, 361	8, 362
1926.....	193, 861	478, 769	351, 591	698, 971	428, 613	8, 916
March—						
1920.....	17, 324	45, 411	106, 091	69, 430	121, 886	790
1921.....	21, 039	45, 445	54, 452	82, 617	63, 091	368
1922.....	14, 673	32, 967	54, 763	64, 377	62, 231	452
1923.....	11, 011	31, 688	66, 441	109, 187	75, 934	310
1924.....	9, 659	61, 172	66, 695	100, 726	74, 464	315
1925.....	16, 480	32, 477	53, 853	63, 281	62, 158	708
1926						
January.....	5, 587	46, 891	46, 654	76, 670	53, 833	735
February.....	4, 742	47, 147	37, 187	65, 356	45, 292	545
March.....	7, 039	36, 167	34, 133	64, 259	40, 641	512
April.....	6, 452	43, 388	31, 410	63, 160	37, 947	506
May.....	12, 558	27, 431	30, 104	58, 154	35, 197	412
June.....	11, 210	30, 762	23, 861	56, 482	29, 959	339
July.....	19, 811	29, 760	22, 457	45, 879	28, 221	356
August.....	35, 774	26, 263	29, 090	54, 273	34, 762	385
September.....	31, 031	38, 319	26, 927	61, 577	33, 843	789
October.....	24, 098	53, 129	23, 873	46, 988	30, 384	1, 359
November.....	20, 545	49, 136	22, 384	43, 488	30, 177	1, 475
December.....	15, 301	50, 375	23, 503	62, 690	28, 746	1, 504
1927						
January.....	12, 821	66, 337	20, 597	59, 842	25, 748	1, 074
February.....	8, 997	46, 840	19, 476	49, 884	24, 313	979
March.....	9, 183	41, 669	18, 108	53, 040	23, 754	1, 084

¹ Wheat flour is converted on a basis of 4.7 bushels of grain equal 1 barrel of flour.

² Includes Cumberland and Wiltshire sides.

³ Includes fresh, canned, and pickled beef, bacon, hams, and shoulders; fresh, canned and pickled pork; fresh mutton and lamb.

⁴ Excludes linters.

COLD STORAGE SITUATION

[Apr. 1 holdings (shows nearest million, 6 figures omitted)]

Commodity	5-year average	Year ago	Month ago	Apr. 1, 1927
Creamery butter-----pounds--	10	17	8	3
American cheese-----do-----	24	38	39	35
Case eggs-----cases--	¹ 819	¹ 872	¹ 92	¹ 1, 858
Total poultry-----pounds--	84	73	130	105
Total beef-----do-----	88	71	88	77
Total pork-----do-----	769	627	672	737
Lard-----do-----	96	93	77	92
Lamb and mutton-----do-----	¹ 3, 322	¹ 3, 289	¹ 4, 074	¹ 2, 970
Total meats-----do-----	930	753	823	878
Apples-----barrels--	¹ 2, 743	¹ 3, 314	¹ 5, 114	¹ 3, 139

¹ Thousands, or 3 figures omitted.

Dairy products continued their seasonal out-of-storage movement during March. Stocks of butter on April 1 were about one-sixth as large as last year and less than a third the average stocks of that date. The stock of cheese in storage, on the other hand, remains considerably above average although some cheese moved outward during the month.

The spring storage season for eggs opened in March. Upwards of 2,000,000 cases moved into the storage houses during the month. Stocks on April 1 were more than twice those of a year ago and more than twice the average. Dressed poultry continued to move out of storage in moderate volume but stocks on hand were considerably heavier than the average.

A little stored beef moved into consumption during the month, reducing stocks a matter of 11,000,000 pounds. The April 1 figures showed a trifle more beef stored than on same date a year ago but the stocks are not at all heavy.

Somewhat more pork than average moved into the coolers during March, increasing stocks until they were materially heavier than last year although not up to the five-year average. Practically the same thing could be said of lard except that the amount in storage this year is approximately the same as last.

Lamb and mutton moved out of storage in volume, stocks remaining slightly below last year and average.

The country's total stock of meat in cold storage is 125,000,000 pounds greater than last year but is still somewhat less than the five-year average stocks on April 1.

The heavy stock of apples that went into storage last fall has been worked off at a remarkable rate. Two million barrels moved into consumption during March. The April 1 stocks were only a little heavier than the average stored on that date.

All told, the storage situation would seem to be encouraging to producers of butter, beef cattle, and hogs. It increasingly suggests that the poultry industry is in the midst of a period of expansion and that egg producers would do well to watch the signs ahead.

EGG AND POULTRY STATISTICAL SUMMARY

[Thousands, i. e. 000 omitted]

STOCKS IN STORAGE, APRIL 1, 1927—UNITED STATES

	Shell eggs	Frozen eggs	Dressed poultry
	<i>Cases</i>	<i>Pounds</i>	<i>Pounds</i>
1927.....	1, 858	33, 164	104, 672
1926.....	872	21, 849	73, 124
Change.....	+986	+11, 315	+31, 548
Per cent.....	+113. 1	+51. 8	+43. 1
Per cent change from 5-year average..	+126. 9	+121. 9	+24. 3

IMPORTS AND EXPORTS OF POULTRY AND EGGS, JANUARY-MARCH 31, 1927

	Imports		Exports	
	1927	1926	1927	1926
Shell eggs (dozens).....	81	68	7, 991	9, 110
Whole eggs, dried (pounds).....	671	80	1 72	1 115
Whole eggs, frozen (pounds).....	2, 131	798		
Yolks, dried (pounds).....	718	721		
Yolks, frozen (pounds).....	1, 219	668		
Egg albumen, dried (pounds).....	694	582		
Egg albumen, frozen, prepared or preserved (pounds).....	1, 350	621	127	178
Live poultry (pounds).....	122	154		
Dressed poultry (pounds).....	972	1, 514	2 1, 803	2 1, 053
Poultry prepared in any manner.....	266	201	-----	-----

¹ Includes all forms of frozen and dried eggs.² Includes game.

RECEIPTS AND APPARENT TRADE OUTPUT AT FOUR MARKETS—EGGS (CASES)

	March			Jan, 1-Mar, 31		
	Receipts	Net storage movement	Appar-ent trade output	Receipts	Net storage movement	Appar-ent trade output
1927.....	1, 919	+540	1, 370	3, 958	+13	3, 945
1926.....	1, 667	+128	1, 539	3, 538	-703	4, 241
Change.....	+252	-----	-169	+420	-----	-296
Per cent.....	+15. 1	-----	-11. 0	+11. 9	-----	-7. 0

RECEIPTS AND APPARENT TRADE OUTPUT AT FOUR MARKETS—DRESSED POULTRY (POUNDS)

1927.....	15, 361	-16,473	31, 805	60, 132	-23,560	83, 692
1926.....	17, 343	-14,228	31, 571	62, 041	-22,829	84, 870
Change.....	-1, 982	-----	+234	-1, 909	-----	-1, 178
Per cent.....	-11. 4	-----	+0. 7	-3. 1	-----	-1. 4

DAIRY STATISTICAL SUMMARY

[Thousand pounds—i. e. 000 omitted]

BUTTER SUMMARY

	March			January to March, inclusive		
	1927	1926	Per cent change	1927	1926	Per cent change
Production ¹ :						
Creamery-----	109, 259	108, 410	+0. 8	296, 837	293, 685	+1. 1
Farm-----	38, 475	39, 150	-1. 7	105, 621	107, 474	-1. 7
Total-----	147, 734	147, 560	+0. 1	402, 458	401, 159	+0. 3
Net imports-----	1, 623	ex. 298	-----	2, 646	1, 873	-----
In storage (first)---	7, 952	26, 313	-----	34, 347	52, 785	-----
In storage (end)---	3, 033	17, 392	-----	3, 033	17, 392	-----
Trade output-----	154, 276	156, 183	-1. 2	436, 418	438, 425	-0. 4
Milk equivalent---	3, 239, 796	3, 279, 843	-1. 2	9, 164, 778	9, 206, 925	-0. 4
Receipts ⁴ markets (gross)-----	51, 512	52, 298	-1. 5	138, 199	142, 393	-3. 0

CHEESE SUMMARY

Production ² -----	29, 241	32, 490	-10. 0	74, 253	83, 249	-10. 8
Net imports-----	7, 479	4, 209	-----	17, 148	11, 453	-----
In storage (first)---	54, 072	58, 175	-----	72, 055	76, 649	-----
In storage (end)---	47, 807	51, 285	-----	47, 807	51, 285	-----
Trade output-----	42, 985	43, 589	-1. 3	115, 649	120, 066	-3. 6
Milk equivalent---	429, 850	435, 890	-1. 3	1, 156, 490	1, 200, 660	-3. 6
Receipts Wisconsin warehouses--	18, 676	20, 961	-10. 9	47, 600	53, 584	-11. 1

CONDENSED AND EVAPORATED MILK SUMMARY

Production ¹ -----	170, 881	139, 381	+22. 6	409, 665	329, 355	+24. 4
Net exports-----	8, 760	11, 063	-----	24, 047	29, 081	-----
In manufacturers' hands (first)---	70, 180	118, 346	-----	101, 320	156, 272	-----
In manufacturers' hands (end)---	66, 183	115, 180	-----	66, 183	115, 180	-----
Trade output-----	166, 118	131, 484	+26. 3	420, 755	341, 366	+23. 3
Milk equivalent---	415, 295	328, 710	+26. 3	1, 051, 888	853, 415	+23. 3

TOTAL MILK EQUIVALENT—BUTTER, CHEESE AND CONDENSED MILK

Production-----	3, 822, 026	3, 772, 062	+1. 3	10, 246, 036	10, 080, 216	+1. 6
Trade output-----	4, 084, 941	4, 044, 443	+1. 0	11, 373, 156	11, 261, 000	+1. 0

DRY MILK

Skim milk stock (Apr. 1)-----	5, 976	4, 280	-----	³ 8, 966	4, 472	-----
Imports (net)-----	106	88	-----	ex. 42	ex. 660	-----

¹ Compiled from special reports to this bureau.³ Jan. 1.² Estimated from receipts at Wisconsin warehouses.

THE DAIRY SITUATION

Again this month the striking features of the current dairy situation are to be found in the butter market. Not for some time have conditions been so unsettled and the immediate price trend so uncertain. While in March there was first a steady drop in butter prices, followed later by steady advances, the month of April has been a series of ups and downs, although at a higher level and within a narrower range. At this date (April 25) the lowest point touched at New York during the month is 50 cents and the highest 54 cents, but hardly a day has passed without a price change somewhere within this 4-cent range. Making some allowances for radical price declines, should such occur during the last week of the month, April prices will probably average 10 cents higher than those of April, 1926, in which event a new record since 1920 will be established.

Coming to the influences which account for the situation, the first condition observed in the markets is the extreme shortage of butter. Storage stocks are down to a point where they are of no consequence whatever. The amount in storage in the four principal markets is about half of one day's railroad receipts. Total stocks in the United States are the lowest on record, so that from the standpoint of supply, stocks in storage may as well be forgotten during the balance of the season. The quantities of butter carried by dealers as current trading stocks are likewise low, about two-thirds only of what was on hand a year ago. Production is lagging along. The estimate for March shows a very slight increase over last year, less than 1 per cent, but with heavy demands from everywhere there is no surplus, and as a result the receipts at the principal markets to which surplus butter is usually shipped are over 3 per cent less since January 1 than last year. These lighter receipts, together with reduced stocks, will help explain why the markets have been so sensitive.

Latest reports indicate that but little more foreign butter is expected. Up until now supplies from this source have served somewhat to relieve the domestic shortage. Total butter imports for the first three months of the year amounted to 3,873,000 pounds, compared with 3,505,000 pounds during the same period in 1926. The official report for April is not available, although heavy shipments which have been received may run the month's total well over a million and a half pounds, whereas in April of last year imports amounted to but 269,000 pounds. On this basis imports for the four months, January to April, will exceed 1926 by approximately 2,000,000 pounds.

Comparison of cheese and condensed milk production offers an interesting contrast. Condensed milk made a very substantial gain in March, resulting in a net increase for the calendar year of approximately 4 per cent over 1926. Cheese production still continues to run 8 to 10 per cent below last year. Condensed milk stocks are the lowest on record for any month of any year since reports first became available in 1920, with April 1 stocks only half of the April 1 five-year average.

Developments during the next month will bear watching closely on account of the nearness of the flush production season and because of the fact that unless an unusual situation should prevail price changes to lower levels are due to occur.

L. M. DAVIS,

Division of Dairy and Poultry Products, B. A. E.

THE EGG AND POULTRY SITUATION

The dominant feature of the egg situation during April has been the heavy supplies available at practically all markets. This was but a continuation of the situation which existed during March and of which evidence was seen as early as February. The results of these heavy supplies have been a low price level, a decided lack of confidence in the market situation, and a very heavy movement into storage.

Prices changed but little throughout April. In fact there has been very little change in values since late in February. The current level remains from 5 to 7 cents below last year. Market sentiment was quite nervous and unsettled at all times in spite of the belief in some quarters that the weakness in the situation had been sufficiently discounted by the lower prices. Demand is said to have been well maintained but to have shown no material increase over a year ago and the general situation remains weak.

Receipts of eggs at the 4 markets during April were about 30 per cent greater than in April, 1926, and it is this extraordinary increase in supplies that has dominated the markets at all times. Total storage holdings of case eggs on April 1 amounted to 1,858,000 cases compared with 872,000 cases on April 1, 1926. Since April 1 the into-storage movement has continued heavy and such statistics as have already become available indicate that this year's movement has been at a more rapid rate than in 1926 and that consequently the surplus in storage, this year over last, has been further increased.

The questions confronting the egg industry, now, are whether this year's production is only slightly above normal but considerably earlier than a year ago, and if so, will the decline in production after the peak also come earlier or, on the other hand, is the increased evidence of marked expansion within the egg producing industry? Some express the belief that the situation is a combination of an earlier producing season and a general expansion. The correct answer, of course, can only be obtained when further information is available.

Reports that the military activity in China has seriously affected the egg breaking establishments of that country are being watched closely in this country. Possibilities of increased demand for domestic frozen eggs are the points being considered in this case. The usual spring export demand for case eggs from South America has continued and exports for April approximated 75,000 cases.

The poultry market, in general, seems to have improved its position during the month. Prices are, and have been for some time, lower than a year ago. This is thought to have encouraged consumption, which in turn has resulted in an increase in confidence. Storage holdings of frozen poultry are still enormously heavy but the rate of reduction is now more rapid than last year at this time and has encouraged the belief that the surplus may be cleared without further material price reductions. The live poultry situation was quite firm and active previous to "The Passover." Supplies were heavy but so was demand and prices advanced slightly. Since that time demand has slackened as is normally expected and prices have shown some slight recessions. Fowls still comprise the bulk of the receipts but broilers are increasing rapidly.

C. E. ECKLES,
Division of Dairy and Poultry Products, B. A. E.

THE FRUIT AND VEGETABLE SITUATION

It is an early, active trucking season with a tendency to heavy production and low prices. After some backward weather in March and April the crops in the South and East are still one to three weeks earlier than in 1926 and about the same as in the forward season of 1925. Many of the crops seem to be about two weeks later this year on the Pacific coast. Increased acreage and good yield are the general rule in the southern trucking region.

Gains in acreage include probably one-half more of early celery and carrots, one-third more of early lettuce, tomatoes, cucumbers, beans, and strawberries, also of Florida and Texas potatoes, and one-tenth increase in early cantaloupes, peas, and Florida peppers. Southern Bermuda onions and second early potatoes show only slight gains over last year's heavy planting or production. Plantings of southern watermelons are about average but 10 per cent under last season. Acreage of southern sweet corn is again extensive. Condition of these southern and southwestern truck crops in general is about average, but is unusually good for peas and tomatoes. The crop situation is still hazy north of the line from New Jersey to California, but a persistent tendency appears toward increased northern and western acreage of main crop potatoes, at least.

Continued depression of the canning industry is a feature of some importance. Heavy stocks of corn, peas, beans, and tomatoes held over may restrict the outlet for the next crop. Otherwise, general business conditions favor a moderately good demand for new produce.

The present potato outlook is based on current shipments, estimated early production, mid-season shipping acreage and plans for the main crop. The old potato holdings seem to be decreasing rapidly, especially in the West, and their market position seems fairly good. Future shipments at recent slow rate of decrease may exceed the 10,000 cars shipped after May 1 last year. Probably the revised total for the 1926-27 shipping season will not be far from the 10-year average. The early start of the new southern crop favors an even distribution through the first few months. The supply may not exceed that of last season until about August when prospective increases in early northern sections would affect the situation. Yield per acre was generally good last year. Unless growing conditions are poor this summer and fall, the season's potato supply from the acreage planned would be moderate to large, and there would be some probability of prices lower than last season for the main crop.

Sweet potatoes are ending one of the heaviest shipping seasons on record. Probably the yield per acre will not be so large this season and with no greater acreage in the northern part of the sweet potato belt, market conditions may be more favorable, at least for the dry-fleshed varieties, although increased competition is likely from the moist-fleshed kinds and from various other vegetables.

Another large crop of early onions led to attempted restriction of shipments, but supplies have been liberal. The mid-season onion acreage seems about up to average, but somewhat under that of last year. Part of last season's large crop was unfit for storage, yet the revised shipment total will doubtless exceed 33,000 cars, passing all records.

Cabbage, both early and mid-season, has been planted very heavily and has yielded well in the South. Supplies are likely to continue liberal. Tomato shipments may be expected to be heavy in May and June and about average for July. Fairly active movement to market and large imports from Mexico have kept prices lower than usual this spring. Later developments depend somewhat on the extent of the demand for canning. Indications suggest moderate tomato acreage in the North and West.

Apple prices have been a little draggy this spring, but the best lots have sold well all along in home and foreign markets. Prices average about the same as a year ago. Shipments have been decreasing fast, especially in the Northwest.

Scattering frosts have not as yet prevented a good bloom in southern apple, pear, and cherry orchards, but general probabilities are against another great fruit season. Pacific coast orchards started late, but conditions are represented as not very favorable. Southern peach growers expect a fairly large but rather uneven production. Florida oranges and grapefruit show a lighter bloom.

May is strawberry month and likely to be more so than usual. The acreage and yield are both reported about one-fourth larger this year. Shipments may regain the 18,000 car average of 1922-1924, compared with about 13,000 the last two seasons. Conditions continue generally favorable for heavy production, although frosts of late April possibly reduced by 20 per cent the large crop anticipated in North Carolina, Virginia, Tennessee, and Arkansas. Prices have been declining fast during the past month.

G. B. FISKE,
Division of Fruits and Vegetables, B. A. E.

THE SITUATION IN VARIOUS KEY STATES

COLORADO

Agricultural conditions in Colorado on April 15 are considered much better than they were 30 days ago. The weather has continued mild with considerable additional precipitation over most of the State except the southeastern portion, which still remains dry after a prolonged drought of some 8 to 10 months. The precipitation during the middle period of March was mostly in the form of snow which had a heavy moisture content. It drifted in places but, in general, was very beneficial and rendered soil and moisture conditions favorable for all farm operations and spring planting. However, in the nonirrigated sections generally subsoil moisture is deficient, and ample and timely rains will be required to complete crops successfully. Snow during this week has further improved soil moisture in the northern and northeastern parts of the State, though somewhat delaying farm operations and planting.

In the high altitudes there is more than the normal amount of accumulated snowfall, which indicates good stream flows for irrigation, while the reservoir supplies in northern Colorado and other sections, except in the southeast, are fully up to normal or better. In the Arkansas Valley in the southeast precipitation has been light, water has thus far been scarce for irrigation, and reservoirs are not well filled. Conditions in that valley have improved with the heavy snowfall in the mountains, however.

All livestock are reported as having come through the winter in very satisfactory condition with few losses and are now doing well. The recent snows compelled considerable feeding; however, in most localities there is still a surplus of hay above the requirements. Prices of hay are generally low and the crop is slow sale.

Reports still stress the desire to increase the breeding herds wherever suitable stock is available. Finances for this purpose are easier than last year. All cattle suitable for the breeding herds are selling locally on the ranches and ranges above the market and \$10 to \$20 higher than last year. Some ewe bands have changed hands at prices ranging from \$14 to \$16.

Cattle feeders have been making money throughout the season and recent advances in prices of fat lambs have made it possible for lamb feeders to come out with some profit and in some cases with great profit, especially for those who bought in half fat lambs during January and February and have had the benefit of the advanced price since. Indications are that about 30 per cent of the wool clip of the State has been contracted at prices ranging around 30 to 32 cents. During the past three weeks large numbers of lambs have been contracted for fall delivery at prices ranging from 10 to 11 cents.

With the improvement in moisture conditions there is a more hopeful tone in farming prospects; however, farmers under dry-land conditions, especially in the east and southeast, are finding it difficult to finance their season's operations. Winter wheat and rye started last fall under adversely dry conditions. Very little precipitation occurred during the winter months and heavy winds during the same period caused considerable damage. The abandonment of winter wheat will be considerably above the average.

Sugar-beet growers are fast preparing their ground for planting and considerable acreage has already been seeded. Under the contract, the northern Colorado beet growers are practically assured of an \$8 minimum for their beets. This will stimulate an increased acreage in this crop though only acreages on lands that will produce a good tonnage are being accepted. In other sections of the State, beet growers are not likely to receive as good a price and the prospective acreage is about the same or slightly larger than last year.

Potatoes have been marketed at very satisfactory prices and a much larger acreage is in prospect for this season than last year. Intention-to-plant report indicates that the acreage of dry beans will be somewhat smaller than a year ago. Other principal crops seem to have about the same acreage as last year.

Farm wages are about the same or slightly higher than a year ago and the supply of farm labor is slightly in excess of the demand. The winter has been favorable and all fruit trees are in excellent condition; thus far prospects for a fruit crop are excellent.

W. W. PUTNAM,
State Statistician, B. A. E.

GEORGIA

The middle of April found Georgia farmers well advanced with their work of preparation and planting. With the exception of the northwestern and northern counties, where frequency of rains badly delayed preparation of land, progress is greater than on this date last year and compares quite favorably with the very early season of 1925.

Approximately half of the total expected cotton acreage and something over half of the corn acreage had been planted April 15. About three-fourths of the land intended for crops had been prepared for planting. No marked change in total crop acreage is in prospect.

Considering the different sections of the State, conditions are quite varied. In the northern and northwestern counties, frequency of rains has badly delayed preparation. Progress in the northeast, while delayed to some extent, is more satisfactory. Only a small percentage of planting is usually completed by April 15 in these districts.

In the central territory preparation and planting are well advanced, with fair to good stands secured in the more southern counties.

The southern districts are also well advanced, with planting very nearly completed. However, rains are badly needed to bring crops to good stands in many southern and southeastern counties.

Prospects for small grains are not as bright as they were two weeks ago. Rust damage to wheat in the northern half of the State and insufficient moisture for oats in the southern half caused sharp deterioration in these crops.

Peach prospects are quite spotted, as the result of low temperatures and heavy frosts in March, the degree of damage ranging from very severe in the northern territory to moderate in some of the more important central and southern counties. While a very good crop was in prospect on April 1 in the main central and southern commercial districts, further evidence of damage by frost late in March is reported as having developed since that date, reducing the outlook to some extent.

Reports from most of the State indicate that less commercial fertilizer is being used and that the average grade is lower, as the result of difficulties in financing purchases.

Fertilizer tag sales by the State Department of Agriculture to April 6 were 86 per cent of the total sales to the same date in 1926. The decrease is particularly heavy in the Piedmont section of the State, where farmers are also unable to make needed replacements in work stock and machinery.

Transplanting of tobacco was about 90 per cent complete on April 15. Considerable difficulty was experienced in getting a satisfactory stand of plants under the very dry conditions existing. This applies particularly to many southern and southeastern counties.

V. C. CHILDS,
State Statistician, B. A. E.

IOWA

Prospects from the ravages of the corn borer are not expected to create any immediate consternation in the farm ranks. Far-sighted farmers believe that this dangerous pest may prove to be a blessing in disguise, bringing about an age of better farming just as the boll weevil did in the cotton States and bringing about a more general usage for corn than ever before. Control regulations have been established in case of the appearance of the pest but just as important is the fact that clean plowing has already been put in practice. Plowing demonstrations and county contests for a number of years have aroused sufficient interest to class the Iowa farmer as a leader in clean, effectual plowing. Also, 30,000 or more silos in the State and the possibility of manufacturing corn stalks into wall board and other commercial products indicate a few of the ways in sight to assist in lessening the probability of serious infestation from the insect pest.

The borer may effect a favorable adjustment between our corn, soy bean, and alfalfa acreages. Some few farmers have already planned to add soy beans to take the place of high protein concentrates previously purchased. Also, the dairymen of northeastern Iowa have been shipping alfalfa from Nebraska or Colorado, paying from \$25 to \$30 per ton and feeding it at a nice profit. If corn will give a gross income of less than \$25 per acre, these dairymen, as well as thousands of other farmers, reason that they can afford to turn more of their acreage into alfalfa. The amount of crushed limestone distributed or crushed on their own farms last fall and the many carloads of limestone going into numerous communities this spring are double assurance of legume acreage increases in Iowa this season.

Previous to April 1 spring field work in Iowa was getting under way quite rapidly. Even in the northern districts, some grain seeding had been completed and a few fields put in readiness for planting later on.

After the 1st of April, however, nearly all field work was delayed by the cold rains in all parts of the State followed by heavy snows in the northern portions. Those who did not finish their oats seeding early were unable to complete this work until after the 20th of the month. The seed oats situation was uncertain in a number of counties and to avoid using shock-damaged or bin-burnt seed more than the usual amount of seed was purchased away from home.

The general crop acreage program will not be changed on account of the great amount of rainfall since the 1st of April unless soy beans and miscellaneous crops replace some intended oat acreage. Many farmers have come to know the value of sweet clover in recent years and have already made plans for sowing this crop with small grain. Applications of crushed limestone and supplementary fertilizers were freely made last season and supplies are on hand for further use of these materials which are essential to establishing sweet clover on doubtful soil.

In northwestern Iowa there is no worry about the probability of having too much rainfall during the present spring season. That district, particularly the western and northern border counties, suffered drought conditions for three years and the present rainfall is a blessing to them. The northwestern group of counties has reported an intended increase of nearly 2 per cent in the acreage of both corn and oats and very substantial increases in other grain crops. Any change from those plans will be to such crops that will take the place of the usual hay crops.

Fall planted grains show condition above normal and there will probably not be more than a negligible abandonment of winter wheat. Early conditions for fruit crops are favorable although a change to warm, bright weather during the next 10 days will bring some of the tree fruits into full bloom, endangering them by risk of frost.

The 25 per cent reduction in the number of horses and the 200 per cent reduction in horse-breeding operations in the past 10 years were undoubtedly responsible for the favorable action which was taken by the Iowa legislature in granting the horsemen State aid for their association. The State department of agriculture believes that this aid will result in directing public attention to the fact that the farmers of Iowa are breeding only about one-half enough horses to replace their own work stock. The shortage in horse-breeding operations in Iowa is a vital problem which our farmers must solve.

LESLIE M. CARL,
State Statistician, B. A. E.

NEW YORK

With temperatures several degrees above the average since February and with less than the usual rainfall, spring is about two weeks earlier than last year. The maple-sirup men in the north country have just taken down their buckets (April 14) after a very satisfactory season, which closed several days ago in southern and western New York.

Winter wheat came through in good shape, with the exception of that which was sown late. Peaches in the lower Hudson Valley suffered some loss of buds through freezing in the winter. Elsewhere everything in the line of fruit seems to be in good shape, though with the possibility of spring frost damage somewhat greater than usual because of the earliness of the season. It is too early to appraise accurately the condition of meadows. Field work is already getting a good start.

Milk production per cow through the winter was slightly greater than a year ago, due in part, to the favorable weather and perhaps in greater degree to the highest price which has been obtained for milk since 1921, together with the lowest feed prices since that year. The campaign inaugurated last fall to even out seasonal milk production by increasing the flow during the late fall and early winter may have been effective also. The feeling among dairymen is more optimistic than in several years.

In contrast to this, the farmers in western New York where most of the cash crops are grown are facing the season with the hope that things will be brighter in the future but with little enthusiasm. Two years of disaster in beans; potatoes at good prices but with only fair crops, many dug out of the mud, and with the prospects of overplanting all over the country; cabbage, only fair last year with some possibility of increased acreage this season; hay, one of the old stand-by money crops, now below the pre-war price, with a few very minor exceptions, for the sixth successive year; wheat on a world-price basis; vegetable crops supplying only fair returns and constantly pressed by competition from Southern and Western States; all these help to give a depressed feeling.

Conditions on Long Island have been the best in the State.

Farm wages are the highest on record for April 1, with the exception of 1920. Taxes are high and constantly increasing. The movement of population away from the farms still continues and with average weather conditions, less land will be worked than heretofore.

Poultrymen are feeling the slump in egg prices that has taken place this spring.

The bright spots of the situation are the facts that many farms are relatively near markets where at least a part of the product can be sold at prices somewhat higher than would otherwise be received; that many farmers are able to keep their farm operations at a minimum and supplement their incomes by working on public work or in cities or letting some members of their family do this; that after all, there is a real advantage in being near the consuming centers; and that sometime, everything is bound to improve.

R. L. GILLETT,
State Statistician, B. A. E.

NORTH DAKOTA

Following the generally disastrous crop season of 1926, the general attitude of the farmers in North Dakota might not be expected to be very optimistic. Add to this the experience of an unusually long

winter with below average feed supplies, with an unusually backward spring, and the prevailing spirit of optimism is rather difficult to explain.

At the present time North Dakota farmers are on the whole more optimistic than otherwise. There is some bitterness extant but mainly the present attitude is one of optimism. The farmers are anxious to get into the fields but up to the present time practically no field work has been possible. A few counties in the slope country in the southwestern part of the State report some seeding, ranging from 40 to 90 per cent complete. For the State as a whole practically no field work has been accomplished. However, an unusually large amount of plowing was completed last fall.

The frost has been all out of the ground for some time and with only a few warm dry days spring work would start in full swing all over the State. Roads in all sections of the State are practically impassable and as a consequence general business conditions are dull.

The winter has been unusually long with an unusually heavy snowfall but not particularly severe as to temperature. Stock losses have been seasonable though they went into the winter with shortages of feed in nearly all sections of the State. April losses among North Dakota stock are usually heavier than earlier months.

The April 1 condition of winter rye was well above the average and the crop looks better than for several seasons past. Stocks of grain on hand in elevators and on farm are much below average due mainly to the poor crop season last year. Inshipments of grain have been much heavier than usual due to shortage of feed as well as the low quality of the 1926 crops which made them largely unfit for seed.

Labor supply is ample. Laborers are coming in in larger numbers than usual for this time of year. As farm work has not started as yet the supply at present is considerably in excess of the demand.

No great changes in acreages of North Dakota crops are expected. Increases in acreages of potatoes and oats will probably be balanced by decreases in the acreage of flax and other crops. The total crop acreage for 1927 will probably show very little variation from a year ago. A considerable increase in durum wheat acreage may be expected, due to better yields last season and prices which have been higher than prices for hard red spring wheat. The increase, however, very likely will be balanced by a decreased acreage of hard red spring wheat, the total acreage of all spring wheat remaining very nearly the same as a year ago.

Generally speaking, North Dakota farm prospects at the present time are good. There is plenty of moisture in the ground in all sections of the State, the frost is out of the ground at a much earlier date than usual, and all that is needed to start spring seeding in full swing is a few warm dry days.

PAUL C. NEWMAN,
State Statistician, B. A. E.

TEXAS

Perhaps the outstanding feature of the Texas agricultural situation this season is the strong conviction that crops must be produced at a more economical figure and that the farmer's living must be made at home. The sales of dairy equipment, the demand for baby chicks and eggs for hatching, the sale of garden seed are good indications of

the trend, and, unfortunately, the unusual number of women to be seen in the fields accentuates the tendency to reduce labor costs.

The northern half of the State has been too wet lately for much progress in farm work, while in the extreme south and in a few scattered localities elsewhere rainfall has been deficient. Owing to the surplus of moisture it is doubtful whether as great an acreage of oats and corn was planted as was intended earlier in the season and it may result in the diverting of some of this acreage to other crops. Probably double last year's peanut acreage will be planted and feed and food crops generally are being increased.

Unusually mild winter temperatures have enabled a great many weevil and other insects to survive, a heavy emergence being expected wherever they were abundant last fall. Should summer temperatures and rainfall favor the propagation of weevil this season, the farmers who are planting a small acreage and working it well should be able to control the insect pests quite effectively. Cotton is being chopped and cultivated in the south and planting is extending northward. Some has had to be replanted and much land rebudded after heavy rainfall. In the south, four-row cultivators drawn by tractors are cultivating as high as 60 acres a day, and the crop is being thinned in many instances by running cultivators crosswise of the rows.

Corn is doing well and roasting ears are being shipped in car lots. The movement of spinach and cabbage has fallen off greatly, but onions and potatoes are being shipped in quantity. Prospects seem good for better than two-thirds of a peach crop. Oats have been affected by wet weather in localities, but the large wheat acreage is making excellent progress almost everywhere. The spring movement of cattle to market and to Oklahoma and Kansas grass has begun, on a smaller scale than last year, owing to the excellent condition of Texas pastures. There is a good demand for all classes of livestock. Sheep shearing is in full swing.

Hatcheries are operating at capacity, turning out the largest hatch of chickens the State has known. Creamery receipts, likewise, have passed all former records. Farm machinery sales are slow, the demand being mostly for separators, combines, and trucks. The sale of fertilizers, while not important, has been less than a year ago. No provision is yet being made by wholesalers for meeting the probable demand for poison to combat cotton pests, although there is some inquiry from retailers. One wholesaler who realizes that the general prosperity of the State depends upon a prosperous agriculture has offered to supply all poison needed at approximate cost to him.

Retailers in practically all lines continue to buy conservatively, and wholesalers report an average number of these taking advantage of discounts. Business in general is reported as somewhat better than last year except in some of the strictly cotton sections. New oil fields are being developed in the east and west and landowners are able to lease extensive acreage at satisfactory figures. Building activities show an increase lately, particularly in the Houston and Amarillo territory. Telephone toll messages are substantially greater than last year. Cotton shipments to eastern spinners and exports continue of large volume, and stocks at the ports are heavy.

H. H. SCHUTZ,
State Statistician, B. A. E.